

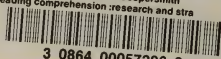
***READING COMPREHENSION:
RESEARCH AND STRATEGIES
FOR
DIRECT INSTRUCTION***

**Midland Empire Reading Conference
April 4, 1987**

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Reading comprehension : research and stra



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Reading Comprehension

**Research
Finding:**

Children get more out of a reading assignment when the teacher precedes the lesson with background information and follows it with discussion.

Comment:

Young readers, and poor readers of every age, do not consistently see connections between what they read and what they already know. When they are given background information about the principal ideas or characters in a story before they read it, they are less apt to become sidetracked or confused and are more likely to understand the story fully. Afterwards, a question-and-answer discussion session clarifies, reinforces, and extends their understanding.


Good teachers begin the day's reading lesson by preparing children for the story to be read—introducing the new words and concepts they will encounter. Many teachers develop their own introductions or adapt those offered in teachers' manuals.

Such preparation is like a road map: children need it because they may meet new ideas in the story and because they need to be alerted to look for certain special details. Children who are well prepared remember a story's ideas better than those who are not.

In the discussion after the reading lesson, good teachers ask questions that probe the major elements of the story's plot, characters, theme, or moral. ("Why did Pinocchio's nose grow? Why did he lie? What did his father think about his lying? Did their feelings for each other change?") Such questions achieve two purposes: they check students' understanding of what they have just read, and they highlight the kind of meanings and ideas students should look for in future reading selections. These questions also lay the groundwork for later appreciation of the elements of literature such as theme and style. When children take part in a thought-provoking discussion of a story, they understand more clearly that the purpose of reading is to get information and insight, not just to decode the words on a page.

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PROGRESS REPORT

Recent Achievements

- Students at ages 9, 13, and 17 were better readers in 1984 than students at the same ages were in 1971.
- Black and Hispanic students, as well as those living in disadvantaged communities, have made sizable improvements.
- Virtually all 13- and 17-year-old students can read **basic** material, and 84 percent of the 17-year-olds still in school have acquired the **intermediate** reading skills and strategies.

Needs Further Improvement

- Nine- and 13-year-olds did not show improvements between 1980 and 1984, halting the upward trend in performance at these ages during the 1970s.
- The average reading proficiency of minority and disadvantaged urban students is quite low and in need of further improvement.
- Six percent of 9-year-olds in 1984 could not do **rudimentary** reading exercises and are in danger of future school failure. Forty percent of 13-year-olds and 16 percent of 17-year-olds attending high school have not acquired **intermediate** reading skills, and strategies. Few students, only about 5 percent, even at age 17, have **advanced** reading skills and strategies.

Other Trends

- The influence of home environment is apparent from the relationship between reading proficiency and both available reading material in the home and level of parental education.
- Six or more hours of TV viewing per day is consistently and strongly related to lower reading proficiency for all three age groups. In 1984, fully 27 percent of 9-year-olds reported watching more than six hours of television per day.
- In general, students who receive homework assignments and do them tend to read better than students who do not have homework or who do not do it.

Excerpts from: The Reading Report Card-Progress Toward Excellence in Our Schools (1985). Princeton, NJ: National Assessment of Educational Progress.

**BECOMING A NATION OF READERS:
RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Parents should read to preschool children and informally teach them about reading and writing.
2. Parents should support school-aged children's continued growth as readers.
3. Preschool and kindergarten reading readiness programs should focus on reading, writing, and oral language.
4. Teachers should maintain classrooms that are both stimulating and disciplined.
5. Teachers of beginning reading should present well-designed phonics instruction.
6. Reading primers should be interesting, comprehensive, and give children opportunities to apply phonics.
7. Teachers should devote more time to comprehension instruction.
8. Children should spend less time completing workbooks and skill sheets.
9. Children should spend more time in independent reading.
10. Children should spend more time writing.
11. Textbooks should contain adequate explanations of important concepts.
12. Schools should cultivate an ethos that supports reading.
13. Schools should maintain well-stocked and managed libraries.
14. Schools should introduce more comprehensive assessments of reading and writing.
15. Schools should attract and hold more able teachers.
16. Teacher education programs should be lengthened and improved in quality.
17. Schools should provide for the continuing professional development of teachers.

Excerpts from: Becoming a Nation of Readers: The Report of the Commission on Reading (1985). Champaign, IL: Center for the Study of Reading.

THE HISTORY OF THE
CITY OF BOSTON

FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENT
TO THE PRESENT TIME
BY
JOSEPH NEALE, ESQ.
OF THE BARR, AT THE MIDDLE TEMPLE
IN GREAT BRITAIN
AND
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BOSTON
IN NEW ENGLAND
IN TWO VOLUMES.
LONDON: PRINTED BY J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD, 1796.
BOSTON: PRINTED BY S. KNEELAND, CORNER OF NASSAU AND NORTH STREETS, 1796.

Printed by S. Kneeland, Corner of Nassau and North Streets, Boston.

FACTORS RELATED TO READING ACHIEVEMENT

- * High expectations for students
- * Amount of time allocated to reading; high "time on task"
- * Careful monitoring of student progress (formal and informal measures)
- * Warm, caring classroom atmosphere
- * Collaborative planning and interaction with other teachers
- * Professional development
- * Clearly stated, specific goals (communicated to students)
- Emphasis on direct instruction (tell/show/model/demonstrate/TEACH)
- Belief in "Basics"
- An open mind towards improving instruction ("Good" can become "better")
- Good classroom organization and management
- Diagnostic-prescriptive instructional approach
- High student success rate: "success breeds success"
- Interactive instruction (feedback/discussion/questions/probes)

*Also listed in 13 Program Attributes of Quality Chapter 1 Programs.

DIRECT INSTRUCTION IN READING COMPREHENSION

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The need for improved instruction in reading comprehension is clear, as four major studies of current classroom practice illustrates.

1. Durkin (1979) studied comprehension instruction in 24 fourth-grade classrooms. After more than 7,200 minutes of observation, she reported a prevalence of teacher assessment (question asking) and "mentioning" (generalized nonexplicit statements). Actual instruction for comprehension accounted for less than 1 percent of the time.
2. Duffy and McIntyre (in press) studied six first- and second-grade teachers to describe what teachers do when showing pupils how to perform various reading tasks. Results found that the teachers seldom showed pupils how to do tasks. Instead, they monitored pupils through basal textbook activities and supplied correctives in response to errors. Teacher interviews indicated that they believe this was what they were supposed to do.
3. A study by Anderson (1981) focused on student responses to reading seatwork in eight classrooms. A major conclusion was that pupils, particularly those in the low group, view seatwork as something to get done, not something to help them make sense of the reading process. These student responses seemed to reflect that teachers seldom provided purposes, sense-making strategies, and suggestions for self-monitoring during either the instruction or the directions for seatwork.
4. Durkin (1981) analyzed the directions to teachers in five basal textbook series to attempt to explain the absence of comprehension instruction in her earlier study. She found little in the textbooks that could be categorized as comprehension instruction. Her conclusion was that the basal recommendations were similar to what she observed teachers doing in her earlier study.

Gerald G. Duffy (et al) states, "In sum, these studies, as well as others by Brophy, Joyce, and Morine-Dershimer, suggest that classroom reading instruction is often mechanical, activity dominated, and basal text driven. THERE IS LITTLE EVIDENCE THAT COMPREHENSION IS TAUGHT AT ALL, MUCH LESS TAUGHT WELL."*

*Duffy, Gerald G., Roehler, Laura R., and Mason, Jana. Comprehension Instruction: Perspectives and Suggestions. New York: Longman Inc., 1984, p. 4.

THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

CHAPTER I		CHAPTER II		CHAPTER III	
The Discovery of America		The First Settlements		The Growth of the Colonies	
The Age of Discovery		The Pilgrims and the Puritans		The French and Indian War	
The Spanish Conquest		The Revolution of 1776		The War of 1812	
The English Colonies		The Constitution of 1787		The Jacksonian Era	
The French Colonies		The Civil War		The Reconstruction Era	
The Dutch Colonies		The Gilded Age		The Progressive Era	
The Swedish Colonies		The Industrial Revolution		The World War Era	
The Danish Colonies		The Great Depression		The Cold War	
The German Colonies		The New Deal		The Space Age	
The Russian Colonies		The Vietnam War		The Information Age	
The Japanese Colonies		The Vietnam War		The 21st Century	

WHAT IS DIRECT INSTRUCTION?

Structured teacher-student interaction

Academically-focused sequenced activities

Adequate learning time

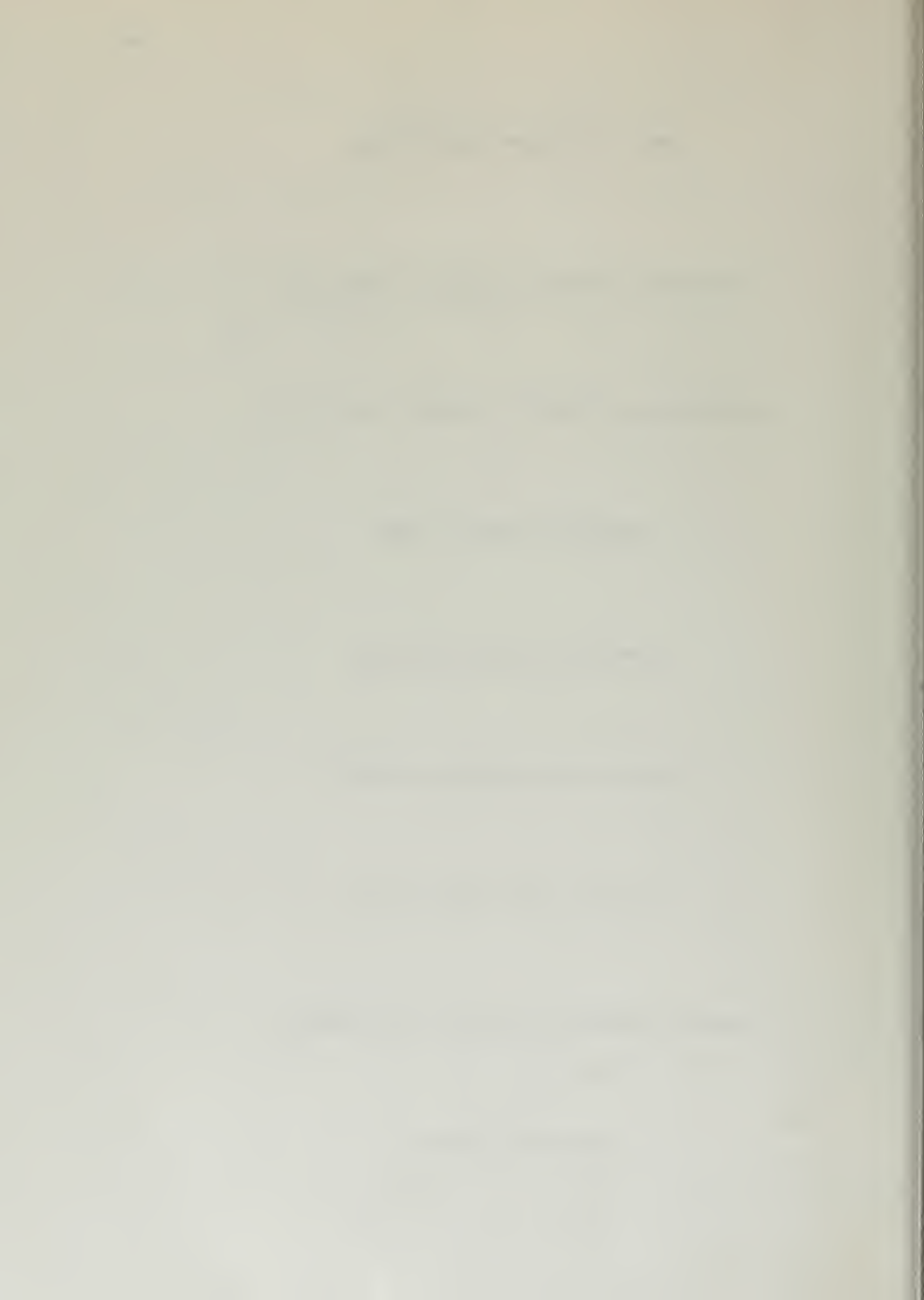
Extensive content coverage

Clearly stated learning goals

Briskly paced instruction

Questioning geared for correct responses

Immediate feedback



THE STUDENT'S FOUNDATION FOR COMPREHENSION

Background knowledge and experience

- Includes language development.
- "Fit" between reader's background and comprehension -- task/passage must be considered.
- Build "bridges" if needed.

Reader's attitude/interest/purpose

- Affects selection of instructional materials.
- Can affect level of instructional materials used.

Decoding skills

- Goal: focus on comprehension skill instruction.
- Initially, comprehension materials should be at student's independent reading level.

THE HISTORY OF THE

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METACOGNITION

SELF-MONITORING OF COMPREHENSION

The student's concerns

- Know what she/he is doing.
- Know why the strategy is worth the effort.
- Know how to apply the strategy.
- Monitor whether the strategy is working.
- Focus on the question behind the answer.

The teacher's concerns

- Understand the goal of the instructional task, its usefulness and the means for achieving it.
- Alert students of the goal, usefulness and ways to complete the instructional task.
- Arrange task so students can deal with each step separately.
- Remind students during instruction of where they are in the learning of the task, why their correct answers are correct, and where the error is in an incorrect response.
- Close instruction by discussing what was learned, its usefulness, and the means used to accomplish the task.

Adapted from: Comprehension Instruction-Perspectives and Suggestions. Gerald G. Duffy, et al. Longman, Inc., 1984.



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READING RESEARCH IN ACTION

Focus on the lessons provided in your Chapter 1 reading classroom during the past two weeks. On the basis of this as "typical" instruction, rate the following statements on a scale of 1 --- 5:

	1	2	3	4	5
	Never		Sometimes		Always
1. I believe that all of my students can learn to read, given adequate time, effort, and instruction.					1 2 3 4 5
2. My Chapter 1 classroom provides a neat, well-organized and caring learning environment.					1 2 3 4 5
3. There is <u>systematic</u> collaborative planning and interaction between the Chapter 1 and classroom teachers on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis.					1 2 3 4 5
4. Students' specific academic needs have been diagnosed and are the basis for instruction.					1 2 3 4 5
5. Students are engaged in learning activities at least 70% of the Chapter 1 scheduled time.					1 2 3 4 5
6. Instructional interaction between teacher and students comprises the majority of engaged learning time in the Chapter 1 classroom.					1 2 3 4 5
7. Students spend less than half of the Chapter 1 working time on workbooks, skillsheets, and similar "seatwork" assignments.					1 2 3 4 5
8. All lessons begin and end with a statement and explanation of the lesson's purpose/goal.					1 2 3 4 5
9. All reading assignments are preceded by background information and followed by discussion of what was read.					1 2 3 4 5
10. Direct instruction (as described in this workshop) is used to teach all comprehension skills.					1 2 3 4 5
11. Specific lessons which develop inferential comprehension skills are taught.					1 2 3 4 5
12. Specific activities which develop higher level critical and evaluative comprehension skills are taught.					1 2 3 4 5
13. Activities which actively encourage independent reading are included for all students.					1 2 3 4 5
14. A system is used to track students' mastery or identified skills as well as success rate on completed assignments.					1 2 3 4 5
15. It is possible to increase the effectiveness of the instruction provided Chapter 1 students.					1 2 3 4 5

FOCUS FOR INCREASED EFFECTIVENESS

Based on this self-rating assessment, the following area(s) are targeted for increasing the effectiveness of Chapter 1 reading instruction in my classroom:

- _____
- _____

General Statement

1. The purpose of this statement is to provide a general overview of the project and its objectives.

2. The project is designed to address the following issues:

3. The project is expected to achieve the following results:

4. The project is expected to have the following impact:

5. The project is expected to have the following benefits:

6. The project is expected to have the following challenges:

7. The project is expected to have the following risks:

8. The project is expected to have the following opportunities:

9. The project is expected to have the following conclusions:

10. The project is expected to have the following recommendations:

11. The project is expected to have the following conclusions:

12. The project is expected to have the following recommendations:

13. The project is expected to have the following conclusions:

14. The project is expected to have the following recommendations:

15. The project is expected to have the following conclusions:

16. The project is expected to have the following recommendations:

17. The project is expected to have the following conclusions:

18. The project is expected to have the following recommendations:

19. The project is expected to have the following conclusions:

20. The project is expected to have the following recommendations:

**A THREE STEP APPROACH:
TEACHING COMPREHENSION SKILLS**

Materials used are at the student's independent reading level.

Step 1: Explanation or Concept Level

- Check student's background/knowledge of the skill to be taught.
- Begin teaching new skill by building on what the student already knows.

Step 2: Listening Level

- Read selection being used to present skill to students.
- Guide students to use the comprehension skill being taught.

Step 3: Reading Level

- Demonstrate skill being taught for students (ask purposeful questions, then show students how to read and determine the answer).
- Show students how to use skill by underlining, circling, or marking material which will help answer the question.
- Provide oral reasoning to help students see how the answer was reached.
- Give practice until students can apply the skill independently. Review or reteaching may be necessary (several times).
- Give students opportunities to practice the skill in the "real world of reading."
- Goal: students can apply the skill at the appropriate time and place with no prompting from teacher.

A THREE STEP APPROACH:
AN EXAMPLE FOR TEACHING MAIN IDEA

Step 1: Explanation or Concept Level

- Connect main idea to categories with which students are familiar, e.g.,

cats, dogs, horses, and cows = animals

apples, oranges, and pears = fruits.
- List other objects which fit to a single category and ask students to name the category.
- Explain that the main idea is finding the one word, phrase, or sentence that tells about all of the reading passage instead of each word or sentence individually.

Step 2: Listening Level

- Read a selection to the students, telling them to listen for the main idea.
- Ask students to give a short summary or tell what one thing the selection was about.

Step 3: Reading Level

- Give students a short selection to read silently; tell students to find clues to the main topic or to summarize it into one word or sentence.
- Discuss reasons for picking the clue words chosen or using one summarizing sentence instead of another.
- Demonstrate how to determine main idea by underlining parts of the passage and reasoning through the material with students.

Practice and Apply

- Give practice until students can apply the skill independently.
- Use materials similar to those the student will encounter in everyday reading experiences.

**A THREE STEP APPROACH:
AN EXAMPLE FOR TEACHING SEQUENCE**

Step 1: Explanation or Concept Level

- Connect to ordering or sequences in student's experience background.
- Examples: numbers (1, 2, 3, 4...) whole apple, partially eaten apple, core.
- Use pictures, manipulatives and/or verbal examples as necessary to clarify the concept.

Step 2: Listening Level

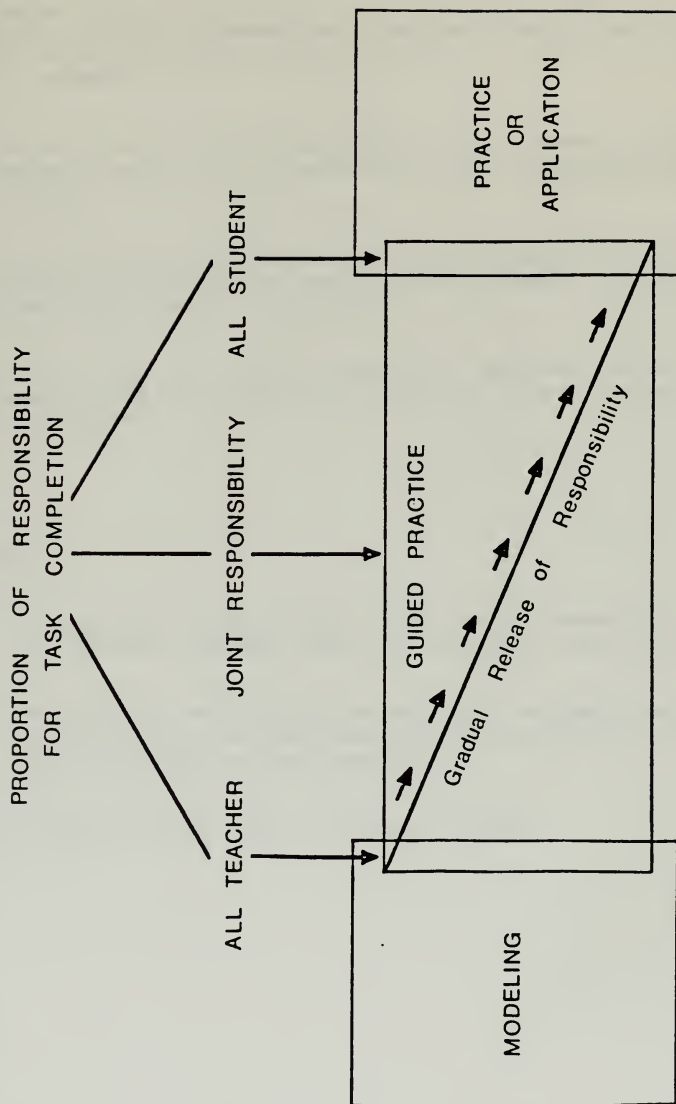
- Read a selection about a sequence experience the students will relate to, e.g., what we do in the morning before we attend school.
- Guide students to use sequencing based on the selection:
 - ask questions relating to the sequence in the selection;
 - have students arrange pictures of the events in order as they discuss the order; and/or
 - present the isolated sentences from the selection and have the students tell the sequence.

Step 3: Reading Level

- Give students a short selection to read silently with emphasis on order.
- Have students arrange the sentences in an order that makes sense or answer questions about the order of the paragraph.
- Demonstrate how to locate sequence events in the paragraph by circling and numbering them.

Practice and Apply

- Provide additional practice/application opportunities for the students.



(From: The Instruction of Reading Comprehension. Pearson, P. David and Gallagher, Margaret, C. Technical Report No. 297, Center for the Study of Reading; 1983)

TEACHING INFERENCES BY GUIDED PRACTICE

1. Teacher asks an inference question based on the passage read. Teacher answers the inference question and points out supporting facts and/or the line of reasoning from the passage.
2. Teacher asks an inference question and answers the question. Students point out the supporting facts/reasoning from the passage.
3. Teacher asks an inference question and points out the supporting facts/reasoning from the passage. Students answer the inference question.
4. Teacher asks an inference question. Students answer the question and point out the supporting facts/reasoning from the passage.

Remember...

- Repeat each step several times (or as needed) to ensure an adequate success level for students before proceeding.
- Unless only one certain answer will satisfy the question, be willing to accept reasonable answers which can be substantiated in the passage.
- Justify every answer to every question.

TEACHING SUMMARIZING BY GUIDED PRACTICE

1. Model steps in summarizing a content/information passage:
 - a. delete redundancy,
 - b. delete irrelevancies,
 - c. identify and sequence subtopics,
 - d. select topic sentence(s), or
 - e. create topic sentence(s).
2. Ask a few questions about the passage.
3. Detect difficult portions; clarify.
4. Predict what the next part will be about.
5. Teacher repeats Steps 1-4 through several models.
6. Student assumes "teacher" role, with support as needed from instructor.
7. Teacher fades support as students gain confidence in modeling role.
8. Modeling role fades as students demonstrate success in applying the skill to reading passages.

Adapted from: The Instruction of Reading Comprehension.
Pearson, P. David and Gallagher, Margaret C. Technical Report
No. 297, Center for the Study of Reading, 1983.

DRTA: DIRECTED READING/THINKING ACTIVITY

1. Preparation for Reading

- Student's experience/knowledge background
- Preview of reading materials
- Introduction of purpose and vocabulary

2. Silent Reading

3. Development of Comprehension

- Emphasis: Literal Comprehension
- Clarifying concepts; answering purpose questions
- Organization of information

4. Rereading

- Silent/oral/inpart/in entirety
- Emphasis: Inference and critical comprehension
- Follow-up on specific skill training in comprehension

5. Application/Practice

- Emphasis: Application (problem solving/generalizing/relating to real life)
- Supplementary recreational reading

DRTA + STORY MAP = INCREASED COMPREHENSION

1. Teacher Preparation

- Read the story and select 2-4 key ideas (theme, basic problem in the story, key actions/events/feelings, etc.)
- For each key idea develop a "Have you ever...?" and a "What do you think will happen...?" question.

2. Before Students Read Silently

- Ask the questions that encourage students to relate the story to prior experiences ("Have you ever...?"). Discuss briefly.
- Ask the questions that elicit predictions about the story ("What do you think will happen...?"). Discuss briefly.
- Ask a purpose question that will persist as long as possible through the story ("Read to find out...").

3. After the Students Read Silently

- Return to the purpose question and answer it.
- Use a Story Map to generate guided reading questions. The emphasis during the first discussion will be literal comprehension.
- (Optional) Return to the "What do you think will happen...?" to verify the students' predictions.
- Use a follow-up task that "pulls the parts together" (e.g., retelling, summarizing, dramatizing).

4. Rereading

- Rereading may be silent or oral and include all or only certain parts of the story.
- Ask questions which emphasize inference and/or critical comprehension skills during this portion of the lesson.
- If specific skill training in comprehension is to be done with this story, now is the time.
- If author's craft questions (e.g., techniques for persuasion used by the author) are asked, now is the time.

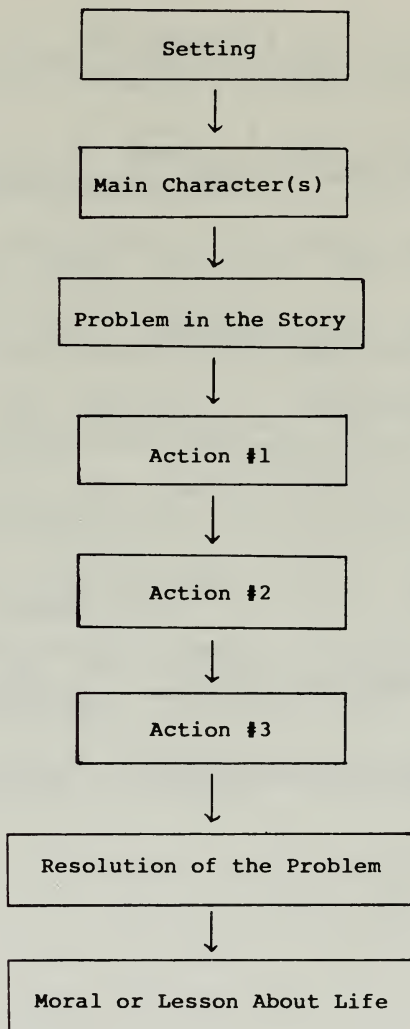
5. Application/Practice

- Encourage recreational reading (e.g., other books on the story topic or by the author, information written from a contrasting perspective).
- If the story is appropriate for application to real life, try
 - problem-solving activities
 - generalizing
 - relating the story outcome to real life (composing a story, etc.).

A STORY MAP

The outline of the important ideas in the story.

Example:



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